

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK  
RARE BIRD RECORDS  
JUNE - JULY 2006

Attached is a list of observations reported by visitors and staff for the period June 1 - July 31. I've compiled only those observations for species that are listed as **Rare, Accidental, Hypothetical** or **Not included** (?) on the park's checklist. A "?sum" indicates a species which is documented for the park but not in the summer season.

Hot and dry are the best terms to describe the Big Bend region's summer season. June and July were both extreme, continuing the trend from the spring season. It wasn't until the evening of July 27<sup>th</sup> that one storm dropped nearly a third of the year to date total precipitation (Interestingly, I lifted this sentence from last summer's report; same date, almost identical rainfall). Since that event, the summer monsoonal pattern has arrived and the region has received abundant precipitation, boding well for the coming fall. Year to date precipitation as compared to ytd totals through July 2005 + or - is as follows: Panther Junction; 3.10" (-4.17"), Chisos Basin; 3.93" (-2.01"), Rio Grande Village; 1.22" (-2.71"), Castolon; 4.24" (-2.39"). Persimmon Gap; 2.21" (-2.17").

Two review species were reported during the period. A **white-eared hummingbird** female was reported along the Colima Trail in late June, and a male **flame-colored tanager** was reported from the Juniper Flat area on July 2. Both reports have been submitted to the Texas Bird Records Committee and are awaiting review.

The common black-hawk pair at Rio Grande Village staged an interesting sleight of hand (wing?) in mid-June. For a period of a week, the pair was observed on the ground below the nest, paying close attention to ...something. In the summer of 2000, similar behavior led to the discovery of a nestling that had fallen out of the nest after a wind storm. That nestling was returned to the nest by park staff, but subsequently disappeared. Suspecting that the same thing had occurred, I conducted a search of the grassy field below the nest, all the while ducking the dives of an irate adult. Unable to find anything, I retreated. A week later, Kym Beckwith found a juvenile black-hawk perched in a mesquite, attended by an adult. The youngster stayed faithful to the mesquite for several days, stretching wings and legs, but never attempting flight. Finally, a week later, Beckwith again found the juvenile, this time back in the nest, and attended by both adults. There have been no further observations of the juvenile, but I assume it has successfully fledged from the nest.

Other highlights include a very out of place neotropical cormorant perched on a power line in Terlingua, a rather mysterious appearance given there were no major weather events at the time, an also out of season long-billed curlew at Hot Springs, and several early migrant warblers (black-throated gray and Louisiana waterthrush) in the Boot Canyon area of the Chisos Mountains.

Finally, Researcher Jeff Troy conducted the annual black-capped vireo survey in the park, locating a total of 23-25 adult birds (17-18 males, 6-7 females), and two hatch-year birds on one nest.

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<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>	<u>PARK STATUS</u>
Neotropic Cormorant	1	6/24	Terlingua	Kym Beckwith Mark Flippo	?sum
Common black-hawk	1-2	6/1-7/31	Rio Grande Vill.	Many observers	rare
	2*	6/30	Rio Grande Vill.	Kym Beckwith	rare
	2*	7/1	Rio Grande Vill.	Mark Flippo	rare
	2*	7/7	Rio Grande Vill.	Kym Beckwith	rare
* juvenile with 1 adult.					
Long-billed curlew	1	6/12	Hot Springs	Brady Surber	?sum
White-eared Hummingbird	1f*	6/25	Colima trail	John Mittermeier	acc.
<b>*Texas Review Species: Reports to TBRC:Lockwood. Pending review.</b>					
Calliope Hummingbird	1f	7/29	Pinnacles trail	Sheridan Coffey Martin Reid	rare
Tropical kingbird	2	7/01	Rio Grande Vill.	Mark Flippo	rare*
*Rare in park outside of Cottonwood campground area, where uncommon.					
Black-capped Vireo	4	6/02	Window Trail	Dan Leavitt	rare
	23-25	6/18-22	see notes	Jeff Troy	rare
	1m		Window Trail	Isaac Couger	rare
	1m	7/16	Maple Canyon	Joe Orr	rare
	1	7/24	Maple Canyon	Will Gravlee	rare
Black-throated Gray warbler	2m	7/29	Boot Springs	S.Coffey,M.Reid	?sum
Black & White Warbler	1	7/18	RGV-campground	Jason Heiner	rare
Louisiana Waterthrush	1	7/23	Boot Springs	David Elkowitz Reine Womite	?sum.
Painted redstart	1-4	6/01-7/31	Boot Canyon	many observers	spo.
Flame-colored Tanager*	1m	7/02	Juniper Flat	Tim Ludwick	?sum

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